

**OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES
PERSONNEL NEWSLETTER**

March 1999

***Area of Consideration Used For
Competitive Placement Plan (CPP) Announcements***

Merit promotion announcements are advertised via the CPP process using various areas of consideration. Each area of consideration that is used to fill a vacant position is at management's discretion, based on FTE availability, applicant pool, and financial considerations. Generally, when positions are advertised, managers are seeking full-time employees to fill the vacancy. If a part-time employee is selected for an advertised position, then he/she goes into the new position on a full-time schedule. If a full-time employee is selected for an advertised part-time position, then he/she goes into the new position on a part-time schedule. The most frequently used areas of consideration include the following:

- NASA-Wide Permanent Employees: Open to all full and part-time NASA employees throughout the Agency, who occupy a permanent career or career-conditional position. This excludes employees on time-limited appointments such as Summer Appointments and TERM Hires.
- Permanent NASA Glenn Research Center (GRC) Employees: Open to all full and part-time NASA employees located on site, who occupy a permanent career or career-conditional position. This includes GRC employees at other duty locations. This excludes NASA employees located at other NASA Centers, NASA Headquarters, or other Federal employees located on site, including Department of Army, and the Office of the Inspector General.
- NASA-Wide Permanent Employees and Civil Service Status Candidates: Open to all full and part-time employees who are currently employed by the Federal Government in a career or career-conditional position, or those individuals who possess civil service status, gained through qualifying employment at a Federal agency.
- Permanent Full-Time or Part-Time (willing to job share) NASA Glenn Research Center Employees: Open to all full and part-time NASA employees located on site, who occupy a permanent career or career-conditional position. This includes GRC employees at other duty locations. The supervisor has indicated his/her willingness to have two employees "share" one FTE position, allowing two individuals to work part-time. Typically, this area of consideration is associated with secretarial positions.

Processing Personnel Actions

To expedite the processing of personnel actions submitted to the Office of Human Resources, Operations Office, please follow these instructions:

- **Standard Form 52-B, (Rev. 7/91):** Send all Standard Form 52B's to the Operations Office (0470), Attention: Ethel McLaughlin, Mail Stop 500-301. Upon receipt of Standard Form 52-B into OHR, it will be logged for processing. For documentation required for Standard Form 52-B, please visit our website at <http://www.grc.nasa.gov/WWW/OHR/next6.htm>.
- **Change in Duty Station:** Send a memo or an e-mail informing the Operations Office of the date and the location of the move for Change in Duty Station on the date you complete your move. This information should be sent to the Operations Office, Mail Stop 500-301, for processing. Any Change in Duty Station has tax implications for you.
- **Determination for Within Grade Increase (WIGI):** WIGI forms for employees should not be returned to the Office of Human resources unless an employee is performing below the "meets" level. However, if a denial of a WIGI is warranted, please immediately contact the Operations Office Specialist for your area. In this case, the denial WIGI form must be signed and returned to Mail Stop 500-301.
- **Application Packages for GRC Vacancy Announcements:** All Competitive Placement Plan (CPP) and Lateral Reassignment Opportunity (LRO) application packages are to be forwarded to Mail Stop, 500-301, or hand carried to the Development Engineering Building (500), Room 1143, by **4:30 p.m.** on the closing date of the announcement. Your application package will be date stamped and logged into OHR for processing. There are **no exceptions** to the established time, of 4:30 p.m., for submitting your application package on the closing date of the announcement.
- **Details and Temporary Promotions:** For all details and temporary promotions, submit two Standard Form 52-B's at the time of your request. The first one is for initiating the detail or temporary promotion. The second one is for terminating the action.
- **Changes in Work Schedule/Hours:** Forward a Standard Form 52-B to the Operations Office, Mail Stop 500-301, for all Changes in Work Schedule/Hours. This form must reflect pre-established changes in the employee's scheduled days/hours. In **no cases** should employees be permitted to work a change in work schedule/hours without first submitting the required SF-52-B to the Operations Office 2 weeks prior to the date the employee is to start the new work schedule.

LEARNING CENTER SUPPORTS EPCS

One of the objectives of the newly implemented Employee Performance Communication System (EPCS) is to foster communication and feedback. The ability to effectively communicate with each other is a skill that can be learned and must be practiced. To help you improve your proficiency in this area, the Learning Center has created a list of resources on our web page (<http://www.grc.nasa.gov/WWW/LC>). Here, you will find course descriptions of programs related to performance and feedback from which you can choose. The programs can be used in the Learning Center or borrowed for group and home use.

Topics covered include:

- Listening
 - Coaching
 - Motivating
 - Team Building
 - Conflict Management
- and other communications topics

The Learning Center is located in Building 21, Room 3
Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday
Phone: 433-2996 or 2997

UPCOMING SATELLITE BROADCAST:

1999 Young Engineers Forum: Workplace and Career Challenges in the Global Workplace

Sponsored by the American Society of
Mechanical Engineers

When: March 25, 1999, 1-3 p.m.
Where: OAI Auditorium



ASK TRAINING

Can I take training on the clock?

Whether an employee takes a course during work time or during nonduty hours is a decision that must be made between the employee and his or her supervisor. This decision generally surfaces when applications are filed for academic courses because many such courses are scheduled in the evening or on weekends. When a course is offered during the employee's scheduled duty hours and his or her workload is adjusted or accommodated to allow participation in training during duty hours, training time can be credited as duty hours. Any training hours that fall outside the employee's normal duty hours cannot be credited as part of the employee's total work hours for the day. Training time should not be charged outside of normal duty hours. As an example, for individuals on flextime, normal duty hours are considered to be 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Any class time scheduled outside of the employee's 8-hour day or on the weekend is personal time and is not to be considered part of duty hours.

Participation in training classes outside of normal duty hours is not to be considered a reasonable justification for reassigning an individual's normal hours of duty or assigning him or her to an irregular tour. Apprentices, for whom training is a condition of employment, can have their daily hours reassigned to accommodate their class schedule. Individuals already approved for irregular tour for other reasons can attend training on the clock at any time between 7 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. on weekdays. Personal time should be used to take training outside of these hours. Exceptions to this policy will be entertained by the Chief, Organization Development and Training Office, when these exceptions are in the best interest of the Government.

Overtime, comprehensive time, or flextour credit hours should not be granted to compensate the employee for time in training unless prior written approval has been obtained from the Organization Development and Training Office. Approval is given in accordance with OPM regulations (FPM Letter 551-17) which state that employees must be compensated for time spent in training;

- " To meet identified deficiencies in the employee's performance in his/her current position.
- " The training must be specifically designed to bring the employee's performance up to an acceptable level.
- " Required to provide an employee with knowledge or skills to perform (at an acceptable level) their current position such as revised procedures, processes, or new equipment.
- " Required to retain or to obtain certification of eligibility where that is a requirement to maintain his/her current position.

Send your questions to "Ask Training" at M.S. 15-4

NEBA TRAVEL INSURANCE

The NASA Employee Benefits Association (NEBA) offers low-cost travel insurance that you may pay through biweekly payroll deductions. NEBA Travel Insurance protects you when you travel, depending on which plan you choose. It may be to and from work, on shopping trips, running cross-town errands, vacationing or taking business trips (local or worldwide) or for any covered accidental death. Your election of coverage determines the cost. Premiums for Travel Coverage are paid biweekly through payroll deduction. Refer to the chart below for plans, coverage, and rates.

Biweekly Rates for Travel Accident Insurance (NEBA)				
Plan	Coverage	\$ Amount	Self	Self with Spouse \$10,000
I	Personal travel and local business travel	25,000	\$.17	.27
		50,000	.35	.44
		100,000	.69	.79
II	Personal, all business travel (worldwide) and accidental death benefit	25,000	\$.35	.44
		50,000	.69	.79
		100,000	1.38	1.48

ENROLLMENT

To enroll in NEBA travel insurance, you should call or visit the Insurance Office, Building 15, Room 103. You will be asked to complete a simple enrollment form and authorization for payroll deduction.

COVERAGE AFTER FEHB ENDS

The Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program offers either temporary continuation of FEHB coverage (TCC) or conversion to non-group (private) coverage:

- for you and your family if you leave Federal service (including when you can't carry FEHB into retirement),
- for your covered dependent child if he or she marries or turns age 22, or
- for your former spouse if you divorce and he or she does not have a qualifying court order (see your human resource office for more information).

How much does TCC cost?

TCC enrollees must pay the full premium for the plan they select plus a 2 percent administrative charge.

How long can coverage continue under TCC?

Separating employees can continue TCC for up to 18 months after the date of separation.

Children and former spouses can continue TCC for up to 36 months after:

How to obtain TCC coverage:

If you lose your FEHB coverage because you leave your Federal job, you are eligible for TCC unless your separation is involuntary due to gross misconduct. You will be given notification during your exit clearance interview of your opportunity to enroll.

If your child will be turning 22 or is getting married, it is your responsibility to notify the OHR Operations Office within 60 days after the qualifying event and supply the child's mailing address. The child must make his or her election within 60 days after the later of the date of the qualifying event or within 60 days of the date of the notice.

If your former spouse doesn't meet all the requirements for enrollment under the spouse equity provisions of law, he or she may be eligible for TCC. If your former spouse wants TCC, you and your former spouse share the responsibility for notifying OHR Operations within 60 days after the date of the divorce or annulment.

What are the spouse equity provisions?

The spouse equity provisions of law allow the former spouse of a Federal employee or annuitant to enroll in FEHB if he or she meets the following requirements:

- Was covered under FEHB as a family member at some time during the 18 months before the marriage ended.
- Has not remarried before reaching age 55, and
- Has a qualifying court order that awards the former spouse a portion of the employee's or retiree's annuity benefit or a survivor benefit based on the employee's or retiree's Federal service.

Coverage under a spouse equity enrollment does not begin until after the Office of Personnel Management has reviewed the court order to determine if it is qualifying and the employing office gets both the election form and proof that the former spouse is eligible for coverage under the spouse equity provisions. The former spouse should enroll under TCC while waiting for the spouse equity coverage to be approved and begin thereby avoiding any gap in health insurance coverage.

For additional information regarding TCC or Spouse Equity coverage please contact the OHR Operations Office and request the information or a copy of OPM Bulletin RI 79-27.

TSP and the Millennium

Participants have asked about the vulnerability of the Thrift Savings Plan record keeping system to disruption as a result of the date change in the year 2000. The necessary code changes in the TSP system have been successfully made and tested. The United States Department of Agriculture has certified that the current TSP record keeping system has been assessed and is Year 2000 date compliant.

The TSP is also developing a new record keeping system, which will be completed in mid-2000. One of the requirements of the system is to ensure that dates in the year 2000 and beyond will be accommodated.

No changes will be required in Agency data transmission until the new system is put into place; at that time, four-digit years are to be submitted.

We anticipate no disruption of service under either the old or new system. Information about the progress of the new record keeping system will be provided in the TSP Highlights, in the Plan News on the ThriftLine (504) 255-8777, and in the Plan News on the TSP Web Site (www.tsp.gov).



NASA EXTERNAL AWARDS

Every quarter, the Center receives requests for nominations for a wide variety of non-NASA awards. A call letter with nomination criteria summaries is sent to the directorate offices for distribution. Please call the Awards Office at PABX 3-2848, for specific information.

The following is a list of non-NASA External Awards solicitation due this quarter, April to June 1999:

William A. Jung Memorial Award
National Medal of Science
Katharine Wright Memorial Award
Admiral Luis De Florez Flight Safety Award
National Air and Space Museum Trophy
Government Technology Leadership Awards
Dr. Nathan Davis Awards
Federal Environmental Engineer of the Year Award
Federal Property Manager of the Year
Laura Taber Barbour Air Safety Award
Nevada Medal
Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Award
Aviation Week and Space Technology –
Distinguished Service Award